

Tribal Member Runs New York City Marathon

■ Diane and David Smith did more than touch down on the city's five boroughs.

By Ron Karten

By the time you hit your second and sixth marathons, respectively, you pretty much have the routine down. Foot in front of foot for four hours and fifty one minutes then fists thrown skyward in victory whether your time is first or 33,000th in the listings. But in New York City on November 3 this year, Tribal member Diana Smith and her husband, David, found themselves in the middle of something much bigger than just about any other 26 miles on the face of the earth.

It wasn't the stopover a few mornings later to say hello to Al Roker from the Today Show and tell the world they're from Oregon. And it wasn't ice skating at the world's most famous skating rink at Rockefeller Center. And it wasn't the visit to the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian, which was unavailable because it was traveling to Washington, D.C. that weekend.

It was the visit to Ground Zero. "We were all so choked up with sorrow that we couldn't talk for about an hour," reported Diane Smith in a write-up she did for *Smoke Signals* about the trip.

Although this was the second marathon for Smith, through coincidence, the marathon has already become the symbol of a memorial to her. For her first one, here in Portland in 2000, she, David, and three others combined efforts to push a spirited young boy in a wheelchair — whose legs had been amputated — the 26-mile distance. "It was one of the most inspirational things I have ever been a part of," she wrote. "This is where my love for marathons began and is an on-going source of inspiration."

But in New York, imagine the neighborhoods, the fans (2.5 million of them!), the history: "Of all the five boroughs, I think Brooklyn was the loudest," wrote Diane. "I will probably get in trouble for saying that though, because my husband & his family are from the Bronx."

Picture the spectators five deep on both sides of the road. "Children would line up to give the runners high fives & candy."

And picture the variety of runners, too. "There were participants from all corners of the globe, including international entrants from some 99 countries," wrote Diane.

But when it came to the Bronx, the Smiths

were prepared for another large family cheering them on.

"My husband ran with his cell phone and therefore we were able to know exactly where we would see our family. Grandma Adeline, from the Bronx, Uncle Steve & Aunt Mary Pat from Valley Cottage, Uncle Gary, Aunt Ro & cousin Susie from Garden City, and Aunt Ginny, with cousins Thomas, Karin, Ryan & Ed from Chappaqua. [These destinations are spread about as far apart as the rez is from Pendleton.] It really makes a difference knowing that someone is there to see specifically you! When we saw them, it was like we had just started the race and I felt a burst of energy!"

And if the reader is thinking that this whole thing was just some garden party, don't forget that they're running all this time.

"We saw our family somewhere between the 18-19th mile and it was around the 23rd mile where I noticed the miles started getting longer. When I needed a boost to help me keep going, I would look down at my shirt, as I had a photo of my boys pinned to me. To see Stephen & Joshua smiling inspired me to keep on going."

Education Department Sponsors Story Teller for Local Schools

■ Michael Lacapa has turned his life into books and stories that delight and educate.

By Ron Karten

With stories about the many uses of spam and the culinary delights of fried baloney, Michael Lacapa turned his life and an appreciation for education to the benefit of kids in Kindergarten through high school at local schools on Thursday, November 21.

In honor of both National Native American Month and the local Restoration Celebration for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Tribal Education Department brought Lacapa in from his native Arizona to charm and to teach and he did a lot of both.

Starring in assemblies at Willamina, Sheridan and Grand Ronde public schools, Lacapa tailored his pitch to the various audiences. For example, he taught illustration and drawing techniques to the little kids at Willamina and Grand Ronde Elementary, but told stories and took questions from older students.

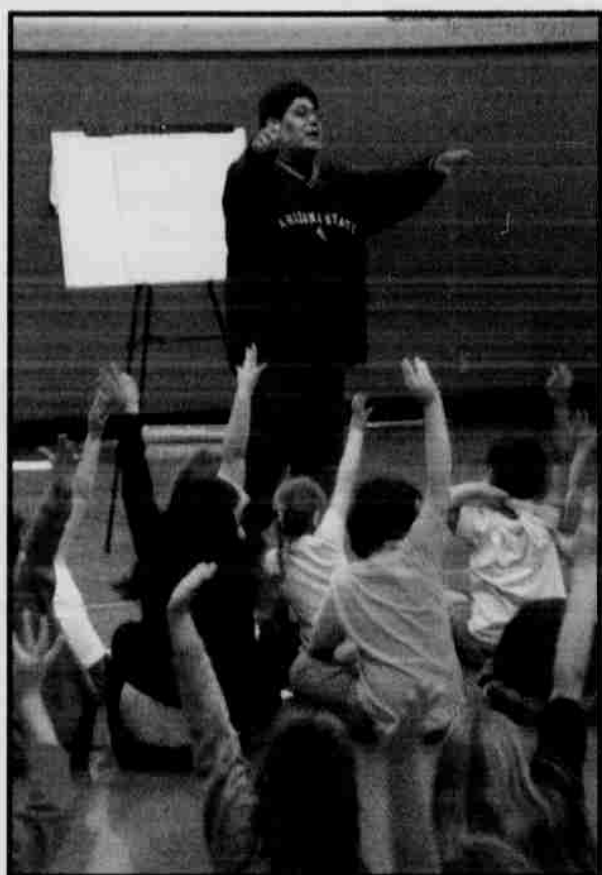
Multi-talented, Lacapa tells and writes stories, produces illustrations and publishes books on his own. Well respected across this country and at international destinations as well, 47-year-old Lacapa said that not too long ago, he was making these trips 10-12 times a month until he "ended up talking about what he does instead of doing it." Now, he has cut back his travel schedule to four days a month tops, but here, he really packed in the presentations.

He has four books coming out this year alone, as well as a syndicated column called, 'Breakfast Cereal' that reaches kids worldwide. He works with other writers, including his wife, Kathy.

His presence in front of the students may well be explained because he started as a teacher at the Phoenix Indian High School and the Chaparral High School, also in Phoenix.

"This is right up my alley," he said before going on.

When he talked about grandma as the one you run to when you're in trouble, he was setting up more than a story. He told his story and went on to say that "Grandma is a metaphor for heaven!" *Metaphor*, mind you. He is in there pitching away, still teaching.



Michael Lacapa entertains Grand Ronde Elementary School students with a story.

Photo by Ron Karten

And his teaching is vocational and cultural as well.

"Indians," he said, "are the invisible minority. I tell the kids that our job is to let them know that we're no longer going to be invisible." And then, he teaches them how. "You don't have to come from a city to be a writer. You don't have to come from New York or San Francisco to be a successful illustrator. You just have to be willing to take what you have, find a vehicle and make it grow."

His brother, Drew Lacata, also has translated their experiences growing up into an artistic occupation. Drew is a well-known and respected comedian.

Lacata is a Fort Apache Indian with ethnic roots from the Hopi, Tewa and Apache Tribes. Kathy, of Irish, English and Mohawk descent, worked with him on *Less than Half, More than Whole*, a story "for all children who come from multi-cultural backgrounds and struggle with where they belong," according to a Newspaper in Education report on the web.

Lacata was no stranger to members of the Education Department.

"We've all seen him at different places," said Lisa Leno, Youth Education Supervisor. "He's excellent with little kids. Very interactive." ■

Keith Brown Leads Perrydale High School To The School's Best Ever Football Season

■ But St. Paul defeated the Pirates to claim the Class B state title in an explosive final at West Salem High School.

By Ron Karten

Perrydale quarterback and Tribal member Keith Brown (see *SS*, 12/1/02 issue) completed 11 of 23 passes for 227 yards and two touchdowns at the 1A state finals on November 30. It wasn't enough for the Pirate senior who had brought his team to state for the first time in the school's history, but as Audrey Chrisman,

secretary for the school, said, "Hey, we made history this year. That's how I look at it."

The game, which went to St. Paul, 50-36F, left Perrydale with a 10-2 season record. Brown passed for 227 yards and two touchdowns in the championship loss.